GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1577
ANSWERED ON:21.07.2014
TELECOM INFRASTRUCTURE
Rai Shri Prem Das

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has accepted Telecom Regulatory Authority of India`s (TRAI`s) recommendations on improving telecom services either fully or partially in the North-Eastern States;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to improve and strengthen the telecommunications infrastructure in the North-Eastern Region including Sikkim;

(d) whether the Government has prepared a road-map for high-speed internet connectivity to the North-Eastern Region, including Sikkim; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) & (b) Based on the request of the Department of Telecommunications, Telecom Regulatory Authority o India(TRAI) issued recommendations on "Improving Telecom Services in North-Eastern States: An Investment Plan", dated 26th September 2013.

In its meeting held on 13.06.2014, the Telecom Commission approved a proposal to implement the comprehensive telecom development Plan at an estimated project cost of Rs. 5336.18 Crores and recommended that the proposal be placed before the Union Cabinet for approval.

Main thrust areas identified for improvement and augmentation of telecom services in North-Eastern Region (NER) are:

(i) to provide 2G mobile coverage in identified uncovered villages. (ii) to provide seamless 2G mobile coverage along the National Highways in NER. (iii) to ensure reliability of and redundancy in the transmission network at State capitals and district headquarters in NER.

(c) to (e) National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN): NOFN project is planned to connect all Gram Panchayats (approx. 2.5 Lakh) in the country including those in the North Eastern Region (inclusive of Sikkim) through optical fibre utilizing existing fibers of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and laying incremental fiber wherever necessary to bridge the connectivity gap between Gram Panchayats (GPs) and Blocks, for providing broadband connectivity. NOFN project is being executed by BSNL (in Sikkim & Assam) and Rail Tel (in Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura). NOFN will deliver bandwidth of 100 Mbps at each Gram Panchayat.

The roll-out of NOFN is planned to be completed by 31.03.2017.